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CBC Newsletter

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For members of the Carolina Bird Club, Inc., ornithological society of the Carolinas

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Spring in the Carolina Sandhills!

Susan Campbell

The Club will be returning to Southern Pines, North Carolina for the 2008 spring meeting. We hope that you will take advantage of the interesting trips and programs we have lined up beginning Thursday afternoon, May 1st and running through Sunday May 4th. Groups will head out to destinations new to CBC members like Long Valley Farm, the Diggs Tract, and Raft Swamp Farm. Others will visit sites that have become known as birding 'hot spots' more recently, such as Hobby Field. We will also have trips to well-known locations such as the Sandhills Game Land and Woodlake. We hope everyone will take advantage of the renovated facilities at Weymouth Woods Sandhills Nature Preserve as well. The new visitor's center and auditorium reopened in 2007 with upgraded facilities and additional space.

Our headquarters for the meeting will be at the newly renovated Days Inn in Southern Pines on US Highway 1 (south) at Morganton Road. Rooms are \$64 per night plus 9.75% tax. In order to receive the CBC meeting rate, reservations must be made by calling their toll free number (1-800-262-5737) before April 7th. Reservations after the cut-off will be honored based on availability. There are numerous motels in the area if you cannot get a room at the Days Inn. Be aware that *there are other events going on that weekend in the area*, so you should not wait too long to make your lodging arrangements. The hotel will be accommodating our field trip schedule by having early breakfast hours, beginning at 6 a.m. Both the menu and buffet items are fabulous. Their new world-class chef is terrific, so be sure to bring your appetite!

You will note that a number of the field trips focus on interesting organisms within the Sandhills ecosystem including plants, butterflies, and moths, in addition to the birds. On these trips, leaders will keep an eye/ear out for birds along the way, but will be specifically seeking out other species. Also, we have arranged some unique opportunities to observe interesting demonstrations by local folks. One such program is the Red-cockaded Woodpecker Nesting Ecology program involving an experienced local woodpecker biologist who will demonstrate the techniques used in monitoring and conservation of this endangered species. There will also be songbird and hummingbird banding, and perhaps an actual prescribed burn.

Participants signing up for whole day trips will want to ensure they bring a lunch with them, as locations for purchasing food are limited in the vicinity of some destinations. Options for 'birding on your own' on the way to the meeting will be posted at the CBC web site (www.carolinabirdclub.org) well ahead of time. Otherwise, you will find a number of possibilities in your registration packet when you arrive.

We are very excited to offer for sale a special meeting t-shirt created by birder and artist Hal Broadfoot. Proceeds will benefit our sponsor of the meeting, the Sandhills Natural History Society. As always, check the schedule posted at registration for more details on all of the weekend's events. We will also have material on restaurants and additional family activities available when you arrive. If you have any questions about lodging, field trips or the Southern Pines area, feel free to contact the meeting organizer, Susan Campbell, at (910) 949-3207 or email susan@ncaves.com

Birding Bars and Restaurants... or Eating My Way to a Larger List

Ginger Travis

I was slow to catch on: Good birds hang around bars and restaurants. And even ordinary birds can surprise us when they eat where we eat.

Ten years ago if you'd asked me what birds I'd ever seen from a restaurant I could have told you exactly one: House Sparrow at McDonald's on Franklin Street in Chapel Hill.

Isn't that pitiful?

It took a long time, but I started to get a clue. The Chapel Hill Bird Club, with Doug Shadwick leading the way, does an annual January trip to the coast over the Martin Luther King holiday weekend. A few years ago we included the Chesapeake Bay Bridge Tunnel in our itinerary – this was before unescorted birders were viewed as potential terrorists – and we stopped on every island looking for eiders, rare gulls, scoters and the like. On the first island north of Virginia Beach there's that little restaurant where you can thaw yourself out from the zero-degree wind chill. I went in for a hot chocolate and came back to find a Ruddy Turnstone scouring the restaurant parking lot for dropped French fries. I saw it score some too. How weird is that?

Equally weird: Visiting San Antonio, where my mother lives, I ate at a Tex-Mex place with sidewalk tables. A guy at the next table got up and left a half-eaten plate of rice and beans. In two seconds a male Great-tailed Grackle landed right on his plate and began gobbling leftovers. A female grackle joined him on the tabletop. They were brazen and they were huge. I looked around the café to see if anyone else noticed. No wait staff came running over, even though there was now another grackle standing in a plastic bus basin piled with dirty plates. If these had been rats Clearly, it pays to have wings. Disarms the opposition.

The peak experiences of my eating-and-birding life came in San Francisco in August 2006. Late one morning I'd been to a café for a pastry and coffee, and I was strolling along Fisherman's Wharf thinking about where to eat next. Brewer's Blackbirds foraged

in the gutters. Imagine that, I thought – Brewer's Blackbirds as trash birds. Then I saw a fellow tourist stuffing himself with a seafood concoction in a cup while he stood next to the railing on the wharf. Stalking toward him along the railing came a menacing (to the tourist) and thrilling (to me) life bird: Heermann's Gull! Actually there were two Heermann's, one on the ground near the guy's feet and the other an arm's length away on the rail. The gulls seemed to work in tandem to scare the guy into giving up his food cup. (Hitchcock filmed "The Birds" just 60 miles away; these birds had studied reruns, I'm certain.) As the two gulls moved toward him with piercing stares, the guy slowly backed away. He survived and even managed to hold on to his food, but it was close. Note to self: no open containers of food on the wharf!

The next day my birding partner and I took a city bus out to the end of the line: Sutro Baths and Cliff House on the western shore of the city. Nothing beyond but the cold Pacific Ocean, next stop Japan. We froze in the wind while trying to scope distant birds with absolutely no success. So we gave up any pretense of hardiness – went into the Cliff House bar instead, sat by the window, ordered Anchor Steam beers and started seeing lifers. Low tide had uncovered a huge rock just below us. A small flock of birds worked over the food-rich surface of the rock – hey, Black Turnstones! Next a dark bird flew solo from the shore out to a larger rock in the surf. Through binoculars I saw the bird was all black except for a red eye-ring, big red bill, and pink legs. Oh joy! Black Oystercatcher. And then a surprisingly big, all-gray sandpiper came teetering toward us over the rocks just like a Spotted Sandpiper back home at Jordan Lake: Wandering Tattler. It'll never get better than this, I thought, wherever else I go to eat and drink.

But you know what? That's defeatist talk – of course it can get better. I just have to resolve to eat out more. And I already have a vision of it: a thatch-roofed beach shack in Baja, a couple of fish tacos, a Corona, and . . . Blue-footed Boobies! How does that sound?



A Primer on Hummingbird Feeding

Steve Shultz



By the time this Newsletter reaches you, Ruby-throated Hummingbirds should be migrating through the United States across a broad front. Leaving wintering grounds in Mexico and Central America, these amazing flying jewels may cross the Gulf of Mexico in an incredible non-stop flight before covering hundreds of additional miles to arrive at breeding grounds in the eastern U.S. and Canada. Members in South Carolina may already have their first birds exploring early flowering plants, carefully hung feeders, or sap-sucker wells. North Carolinians usually have to wait a little longer, and may be on the look-out for the season's first bird, often a freshly-plumaged male. Wherever you live, you may be one of many who enjoy attracting hummingbirds through the use of nectar (sugar water) feeders. This article is intended to provide hints in purchasing, stocking, and maintaining nectar feeders for hummingbirds and other thirsty critters.

First time purchasers of hummingbird feeders are greeted with a dizzying array of choices from utilitarian models to fine works of art. Although the variety is great, most feeders fall into one of two categories – gravity-fed and saucer-type – and nearly all models will serve to attract birds. Gravity-fed feeders feature a reservoir atop the feeding ports. Nectar flows to the ports via gravity, and construction of the feeder and the vacuum created in reservoir (hopefully) serve to keep the sugar water from draining out and forming a sticky puddle. Saucer-type feeders store the nectar below the feeding ports, and are thus less prone to leakage than gravity feeders, which can develop annoying drips. In general gravity feeders allow for a larger nectar reservoir, can be easier to disassemble and clean, and it is often easier to gauge the volume of remaining sugar water at a glance. Saucer feeders rarely leak, but are limited to the amount of nectar they can hold as the depth of the entire reservoir must be within “tongue’s length” of the feeding port. I suggest choosing a feeder that is simple and easy to clean, as proper maintenance of the feeder is critical to the health of “your” hummingbirds.

Now that you have a feeder, what goes in it? Most purveyors of feeders also stock a variety of nectars, some in powder form and some in liquid form. The

one thing that all of these have in common is that they are much more expensive than good old crystal sugar. Regardless of the packaging, these prepared products contain sugar as the primary ingredient, and there is not really a need to include anything else. The sugar water mixture is easy to make – just add 4 or 5 parts water to 1 part sugar and boil. The exact ratio of sugar to water is not terribly important, though research indicates the ratio of sugar to water should not be more than 4:1. The addition of red food coloring is not necessary and may actually be harmful. The coloring of the feeder, which is usually red, is sufficient to attract birds. The mixture should be boiled to ensure any bacteria are rendered incapable of harm, and should of course be cooled prior to filling the feeder. Sugar water will keep in the refrigerator for a week or so, but has a shorter life once in the feeder. This brings us to placement of the feeder...

Ideally a hummingbird feeder is in an area that is easy for the birds to see and approach, sheltered from wind that can cause gravity feeders to sway and leak, and out of direct sunlight. Of course finding this ideal location is not always possible, so it is important to keep your feeder(s) properly maintained. Nectar can become milky fairly quickly in the summer, and this is an indication the sugar water is becoming a breeding ground for not-so-fun bacteria and molds. Plan on changing the sugar water at least twice a week, but you may find that a) your birds drain the feeder, or b) the nectar goes bad quickly. In these cases more frequent fill-ups are required. Each time the feeder is taken down for refilling it should be cleaned. Clean the feeder with hot water or hot water and a small amount of bleach. Extra care should be taken to ensure the feeding ports and narrow “plumbing” within the feeder are clean. While special tools are available at wild bird stores, I’ve found that pipe cleaners work quite well and are inexpensive. A dark alga growing on or around the feeding ports is an indication that your cleaning efforts are falling behind. Consider buying two feeders so that a clean one can be placed outside immediately, giving you time to properly clean the second and have it ready for the next change out.

(continued on page 4)

A Primer on Hummingbird Feeding (continued)

Now that you have a well-stocked feeder and are attracting beautiful hummingbirds, you might run into another problem – insects. The same yummy nectar favored by the birds is quite attractive to “bugs”, particularly ants and bees/wasps. Ants are fairly easy to deal with, as the concept on an “ant moat” is very effective. The moat is sometimes built into the feeder and is sometimes a separate piece that can be purchased along with the feeder. In either case filling the circular moat with water provides a barrier to ants that would otherwise form a buffet line to your feeder, cause a mess, die in the nectar, and generally foul things up. Be sure to use water in the moat. Some have tried vegetable oil or grease barriers to repel ants, but having these substances in close proximity to hummingbirds can be dangerous, as greased or oiled feathers will not function properly, potentially leading to

the death of the bird due to feeding, thermoregulation, or flight issues. Bees are a little more difficult to repel as they are generally engineered to utilize the same natural nectar sources as hummingbirds. Some feeders have “bee guards”, plastic mesh covering the feeding ports that are, theoretically, taller than a bee’s feeding organ is long, but this is not always the case. In many cases bees/wasps are just part of the deal.

We’ve looked at a few tips for buying, stocking, and maintaining hummingbird feeders. Your local purveyor of wild bird products can likely show you which models are most popular in your area. Enjoy the chance to see one of nature’s most magnificent creations in your yard, and here’s to many successful seasons of hummingbird-ing!

Matching Grant Opportunity Raises Over \$7,400 for the N.C. Birding Trail

Lena Gallitano

The NC Birding Trail steering committee would like to thank each and every one of the Carolina Bird Club members who contributed to the matching grant for funds to publish the Piedmont Trail Guide. Mecklenburg Audubon Society also conducted a matching grant with their members that was subsequently matched by CBC and we extend our appreciation to them as well. In total, \$7,455.70 was contributed to the NC Birding Trail for the Piedmont Trail Guide that will be released in May. You can find information on the Piedmont sites at www.ncbirdingtrail.org.

The Mountain Trail Guide site nomination process will close April 1 – contact local site managers to be sure your favorite birding location in the mountains has been nominated for the Birding Trail. The Mountain Trail Guide will be released in May 2009.

New Members

Robert Blohme Bennett, NC	Elva Hendrix Advance, NC	Sandra Sink Kure Beach, NC	Hal & Peggy Schachte Sullivan’s Island, SC	Will Whitsett Mount Pleasant, SC
Joyce and Kyle Braxton Hemingway, SC	Tom Hofstetter Aiken, SC	Patricia Schlegel Castle Hayne, NC	Rebecca Trull Sanford, NC	John Willson New Ellenton, SC
Glenn & Carolyn Croteau Seneca, SC	Anita Kuehne Raleigh, NC	Bibby Moore Richard Kunst Chapel Hill, NC	Charles Dean Tysinger Mebane, NC	Meret Wilson Ormand Beach, Fl
Dave Gustafson Pawleys Island, SC	Ruth-Marie and Jimmy Lyons Aiken, SC	Becky Rickenbacker Lexington, SC	Kristi Ward Greensboro, NC	
	Mary Storms Supply, NC	Bill & Margot Sloup Southport, NC	John Weinstein Charleston, SC	

Deceased Members

Maxilla Evans
Carolyn Gibson

CBC Bonus Trips: A Chance to Bird With Old Friends and Make New Ones in Fun Places Around the Carolinas and Beyond!

The CBC is pleased to announce several bonus in-state field trips for 2008. Information on the out-of-state trip announced in the previous edition of the Newsletter is also listed. As always, contact the trip leaders for more information and to reserve your place on the trip. These offerings fill up fast, so act soon to avoid disappointment!

Brunswick County Woodpeckers - April 5-6: Brunswick County, NC is for woodpeckers! In addition to having several colonies of the endangered Red-cockaded Woodpecker in Boiling Spring Lakes, the area is great for finding North Carolina's other six resident woodpeckers, plus it serves as winter home for the Yellow-bellied Sapsucker. In early April we expect much breeding activity to be evident! The trip will include several Brunswick County NC Birding Trail sites such as Brunswick Town and Southport. Woodpeckers will be prime target birds; however, we should get a great assortment of migrants, area specialties, and overwintering birds. Be prepared for an early morning on Sunday as Red-cockaded Woodpeckers are early risers! Dates: Saturday, April 5, 2008 from 8 a.m. to 4 p.m. and Sunday, April 6, from 6 a.m. to noon. Hotel information and field trip departure sites to be determined. Cost: \$20. Please note that trip participants will be responsible for their lodging Saturday night. Personal vehicles will be used each day, and carpooling is encouraged. Contact John Ennis at johnxennis@bellsouth.net or by phone at (910) 371-9729 for more details or Dana Harris at hq@carolinabirdclub.org to establish your slot on the trip. See the registration form on page 10.

New! Dobbins Farm, Townville, SC – April 27: Contact Linda Kolb at Rapahana4@hotmail.com for more information. Cost is \$10. Dobbins Farm has been a local hotspot for migrants and birds of open country. Ponds may hold lingering waterfowl or migrating shorebirds. More details will be posted on the CBC website as they become available.

New! Howell Woods, North Carolina - May 16-18: Bring your adventurous spirit and enthusiasm for birding the 2,800 acres of the Howell Woods Learning Center, Four Oaks, NC, a site on the NC Birding Trail – Coastal Plain. Trip is limited to **16** participants who are willing to share 2 cabins on site - one for men and one for women. The two cabins are nestled in pine trees overlooking a longleaf pine savannah restoration site and are a short walk to the Learning Center building. The cabins are a recent addition to Howell Woods and consist of 2 rooms/cabin, 4 people/room, each room with a private bath. Each cabin has a shared kitchen complete with all dining and cooking appliances and utensils plus an outdoor grill and picnic tables. Guests will need to bring the food they would like to cook. They provide organic shade grown coffee and organic spices! There is a country grill nearby, and numerous restaurants are available in Smithfield, about 20 minutes away, for those who prefer not to cook. Jamie Sasser, Director of Howell Woods, and Chris Moorman, Wildlife Biologist with NC State University, will provide expert leadership to locate the following expected birds: Mississippi Kites, Kentucky, Swainson's, Hooded and Prothonotary Warblers, American Redstarts, Yellow-breasted Chat, Ovenbird, Northern Parula, Black-and-white Warbler and possible Black-throated Blue Warbler, Summer Tanager, Brown-headed Nuthatch, Yellow-throated Vireo, Field Sparrow, Blue Grosbeak, Indigo Bunting, Orchard Oriole, Red-headed Woodpecker, both night herons, Red-tailed and Red-shouldered Hawks.

Trip cost is \$40/person for lodging only. Linens are available for an extra fee. Each person will be responsible for their own food. Email Lena Gallitano at lena_gallitano@ncsu.edu or call at (919) 571-0388 for details. To learn more about Howell Woods, go to www.johnstoncc.edu/howellwoods.

The registration form for these trips is on page 11. Prior to submitting the form, please confirm with the trip leader or CBC Secretary, Dana Harris, that your space is confirmed. Dana can be reached via e-mail at hq@carolinabirdclub.org.

CBC Bonus Trips (continued)

Maine- Puffins, boreal birds and spectacular scenery!

Join CBC member and globetrotting birding guide Simon Thompson from **July 11-19, 2008** on this very special Ventures, Inc. trip designed especially for the CBC. Maine is wonderful to visit in the summer for its cool climate and fine scenery, and has long been a popular vacation destination. It also happens to be an outstanding birding destination, offering a variety of habitats, which offer quite different birding opportunities from one another. Our venture will begin in Portland, where we will explore the waders and water birds of Scarborough Marsh. From there we go to Maine's fabled coast, where we will visit Acadia National Park and then head "down east" to investigate some specialized habitats -- the boreal forest and blueberry barrens of easternmost Maine. We will visit Moosehorn National Wildlife Refuge, several state parks, Campobello Island (site of one of the Roosevelt family's summer homes), Great Wass Island (a Nature Conservancy preserve), and other "down east" sites. One of the highlights of our trip will undoubtedly be our boat ride to Machias Seal Island, site of breeding Atlantic Puffin and Arctic Tern colonies, where we will be able to spend time ashore getting close-up looks and photographs of these two species. We will also take a boat ride out of Bar Harbor to look for Atlantic Puffin and Roseate Tern on Petit Manan Island and then to look for pelagic birds and whales a bit further out in the Gulf of Maine. Target species include: Spruce Grouse, Yellow-bellied Flycatcher, Three-toed & Black-backed Woodpeckers, Boreal Chickadee, Gray Jay, Atlantic Puffin, Black Guillemot, Razorbill, Arctic & Roseate Terns, Wilson's Storm-Petrel, Manx Shearwater, Black-legged Kittiwake, Common Loon, Common Eider, Magnolia, Bay-breasted & Blackpoll Warblers, Saltmarsh & Nelson's Sharp-tailed Sparrows.

The cost of the Maine Venture is \$1975 *from Portland* based on double occupancy (Single supplement \$325). **Price includes:** Van transportation from Portland, accommodation, meals, boat trips, admission fees, information packet & bird checklist, and guide/leader service, plus a \$50 donation to the CBC. **Not included:** Airfare to Portland, alcoholic beverages, and items of a personal nature. Reservations and prepayment are required on all Ventures. A \$200 deposit is required to reserve your spot. Please make your check payable to VENTURES, Inc. and send it to the address below. Limited to **10** participants. For more information, or to reserve your spot on this Ventures, Inc. trip, contact Simon Thompson at: Ventures, PO Box 1095, Skyland NC 28776. The phone is 828-253-4247. E-mail: travel@birdventures.com

N.C. Birding Trail Update

The Birder Friendly Business and Birder Friendly Community training program has many dates scheduled from the coast to the mountains for the remainder of 2008. To date, more than 160 people have attended this training. Participants are learning that birding is big business in North Carolina and many are looking to reach this niche market. You can find the list of participants and a connection to their business on the NC Birding Trail website under Birder Friendly Businesses. We hope you will patronize these businesses and don't forget to leave a "birder calling card" as you travel the State in search of the latest rarity! For more information, visit the NC Birding Trail website: www.ncbirdingtrail.org

Don't forget that the Coastal Plain Trail Guide is now available for purchase. The 172-page book highlights 102 sites along North Carolina's beautiful coast and coastal plain. Birders can visit sites individually or string together numerous "birding drives" that take in multiple sites. The spiral bound guide includes color photos, detailed maps, site overviews, logistic information, and lists special interest species for each location. The Coastal Plain Trail Guide can be ordered at the discount price of \$10 per copy through the NC Birding Trail website, which links directly to the N.C. Wildlife Resources Commission's "NC Wild" online store. The Piedmont Trail Guide is scheduled for a June 2008 release, followed by the Mountain region guide in 2009.

Southern Pines Field Trip Schedule

Thursday, May 1

These trips will take place at Weymouth Woods Sandhills Nature Preserve. Meet in the Visitors Center.

Trip 1: Prescribed Burning (2:00 p.m.)

Trip 2: Migration Bird Banding (3:00 p.m.)

Friday, May 2

Morning Half-Day Trips

(leave from the hotel parking lot)

Trip 3: Woodlake (7:00 a.m.)

Trip 4: Slate Road and Camp Mackall (7:15 a.m.)

Trip 5: Hobby Field and Horse Country (7:15 a.m.)

Trip 6: Weymouth Woods Sandhills Nature Preserve
(7:20 a.m. or meet at the Preserve parking lot
at 7:30 a.m.)

Afternoon Half-Day Trips

(meet in the Weymouth Woods Visitors Center)

Trip 7: Butterflies (1:00 p.m.)

Trip 8: Wildflowers (1:15 p.m.)

Trip 9: Digiscoping (1:15 p.m.)

Trip 10: Red-cockaded Woodpecker Nesting Ecology
(1:30 p.m.)

All-Day Trips

(leave from the hotel parking lot)

Trip 11: Howell Woods Environmental Learning
Center and Raven Rock State Park (7 a.m.)

Trip 12: Sandhills Game Land (7:15 a.m.)

Trip 13: Raft Swamp Farms (7:30 a.m.)

Saturday, May 3

Morning Half-Day Trips

(leave from the hotel parking lot)

Trip 14: Long Valley Farm (7:00 a.m.)

Trip 15: All American Trail (Ft. Bragg) (7:15 a.m.)

Trip 16: Hobby Field and Horse Country (7:15 a.m.)

Trip 17: Weymouth Woods Sandhills Nature Preserve
(7:20 a.m. or meet at the Preserve parking lot
at 7:30 a.m.)

Afternoon Half-Day Trips

(meet in the Weymouth Woods Visitors Center)

Trip 18: Butterflies (1:00 p.m.)

Trip 19: Wildflowers (1:15 p.m.)

Trip 20: Hummingbirds (1:15 p.m.)

Trip 21: Red-cockaded Woodpecker Nesting Ecology
(1:30 p.m.)

All-Day Trips

(leave from the hotel parking lot)

Trip 22: Howell Woods Environmental Learning
Center and Raven Rock State Park (7 a.m.)

Trip 23: Hinson Lake and Diggs Tract (7:15 a.m.)

Trip 24: Raft Swamp Farms (7:30 a.m.)

Sunday, May 4

Trip 25: Hobby Field and Horse Country (7:30 a.m.)

Trip 26: Southern Pines/Pinehurst Area (7:45 a.m.)

Several other Sunday half-day trips will be scheduled to area hotspots Saturday evening. Locations will be dependent on bird activity Friday and Saturday.

Join us Friday for *Social Hour* hosted by Sandhills Natural History Society at Weymouth Woods Sandhills Nature Preserve from 4:30 p.m. to 6 p.m.. At 8 p.m. Jeff Marcus from the NC Wildlife Resources Commission's Wildlife Diversity program will present results from bird studies in the Sandhills Game Land. In 2004 a study was initiated to provide information on key habitats during breeding, migration, and non-breeding seasons. One of the early findings was the expansion of Bachman's Sparrows into new areas that were converted from closed canopy, fire-suppressed woodlands into open savannah habitats with herbaceous ground cover. Jeff will summarize a new study designed to track Bachman's Sparrow populations, and to compare their needs to those of another focal species, Bobwhite.

Saturday the hotel will offer a buffet dinner at 6 p.m. for \$25.95 per person (including tax and gratuity). Offerings will include beef, chicken and a vegetarian entrée with sides, salad bar and assorted desserts. The Annual Meeting will begin at 7:30 p.m. followed by a program by local biologist and photographer, Todd Pusser. Todd, a Moore County native, grew up exploring in the Sandhills. He has learned much about the native flora and fauna and has a real love of sharing his knowledge and experiences. Todd is an internationally-renowned writer and photographer. His work is regularly found in *NC Wildlife* and has been featured in *National Wildlife* and *National Geographic* as well. He will present a collection of his favorite images from around the region.

Southern Pines Field Trip Descriptions

Trip 1: Prescribed burning

You will have the unique opportunity to join park staff at Weymouth Woods State Nature Preserve for an up-close look at how a prescribed burn is prepared and conducted. Participants will measure weather parameters, and if conditions are favorable, staff will burn a small area. The program will last about two hours.

Trip 2: Migration bird banding

Join park staff and volunteers as they run the mist nets adjacent to the Pine Island Trail. A variety of migrants as well as local resident species are possible. You may see such species as Wood Thrush, Ovenbird, Kentucky Warbler, Worm-eating Warbler, Common Yellowthroat, Acadian Flycatcher, Carolina Wren, or Northern Cardinal in hand. Bring along a camera as well as binoculars since photo opportunities should be plentiful. We plan to close the nets at 5 p.m.

Trip 3: Woodlake

Enjoy a diversity of stops within the private residential golf community of Woodlake, which surrounds Lake Surf, the largest body of water in Moore County. Not only will we look for lingering waterfowl, but also we will visit both upland hardwood and pine stands for migrants. Possibilities include Bald Eagle, Green Heron, Pileated Woodpecker, Yellow-throated Vireo and Prothonotary Warbler. We will watch for large mammals such as Coyote, Grey Fox, Bobcat, River Otter, Beaver and Muskrat that frequent the area. Restrooms are available at the clubhouse. The group should be back at the hotel by noon.

Trip 4: Slate Road & Camp Mackall

Join Ft. Bragg biologist Alan Schultz for a guided tour of habitat on the edge of Camp Mackall's pine savannahs as well as bottomland hardwood along Drowning Creek. It is here, where the Army's elite Special Forces train, that Lark Sparrows historically have bred. We may find Northern Bobwhite, Loggerhead Shrike, Red-cockaded Woodpecker and Brown-headed Nuthatch along with Wood Duck, Red-headed Woodpecker, Northern Parula and perhaps Swainson's Warbler. There will be several stops with short periods of walking at each. The trip will end at noon.

Trips 5, 16 & 25: Hobby Field & Horse Country

We will head to 'horse country' on the eastern edge of Southern Pines and focus on open-country birds. First stop will be Hobby Field. This 70-acre site has been home to a pair of Scissor-tailed Flycatchers the past three summers. We expect to see Grasshopper Sparrows, Chipping Sparrows, Eastern Meadowlarks, Red-headed Woodpeckers, Eastern Bluebirds and perhaps a Loggerhead Shrike. Next, we will take a walk into the adjacent Walthour-Moss Foundation property for Pine Warbler, Brown-headed Nuthatch and Red-cockaded Woodpecker, Summer Tanager, Acadian Flycatcher and Red-eyed Vireo and perhaps Red-shouldered Hawk. If we are lucky, we may see Northern Bobwhite, Wild Turkey or even members of our breeding American Kestrel population. Bring plenty to drink and comfortable walking shoes. We will return to the hotel by noon.

Trips 6 & 17: Weymouth Woods

Walking about a mile of the loop trails through typical Sandhill drains we will look for flocks of migrant flycatchers, thrushes and warblers. Songs of early Blue-headed Vireos and Bachman's Sparrows which breed at the preserve should be heard. There will also be the opportunity to learn about the breeding groups of Red-cockaded Woodpeckers at the park this season. Fox Squirrels are more active this time of year so look for family groups foraging in the woods. The group will also get a good look at the newest changes to the creek bottom as a result of our resident beaver's winter work. In addition, you will have a chance to visit with a bird bander at the new feeder banding station. Hopefully you will be able to see some of Weymouth's summer residents at very close range. Wear comfortable shoes and bring a camera - there could be some good photo opportunities. The program will be over at noon.

Trips 7 & 18: Butterflies

This will be an opportunity to sharpen your Duskywing and Cloudywing identification skills. These species are plentiful along the trails at Weymouth Woods. Hoary-edged Skippers may also be fairly common at this time of year. In addition, we may encounter Pearly Eyes as well as an American Copper. The program will last about two hours.

Southern Pines Field Trip Descriptions (continued)

Trips 8 & 19: Wildflowers

The winding trails of Weymouth Woods will take us through several types of upland Sandhills habitats in search of local spring specialties such as blooming pitcher plants, sundews, Wild Indigo, Goats Rue, Rosy Spiderwort, Sandhill Sandwort, Tread Softly and Queen's Root. The terrain will be good, but be prepared to get close to dense vegetation—long pants and long sleeves are encouraged. The walk will be approximately two hours long.

Trip 9: Digiscoping

Learn how to take pictures with a spotting scope and a digital camera. The group will work the area close to the Visitor's Center, as well as the bird feeding station, looking for a variety of photo opportunities. Even if you are familiar with the process, you may pick up pointers on improving focus, depth of field, and overall picture quality.

Trips 10 & 21: Red-cockaded Woodpecker Nesting Ecology

Join a local woodpecker biologist to learn about the unique ecology of this native endangered species. Hear about the history of woodpecker conservation efforts in the Sandhills. Field techniques used for monitoring of Red-cockaded Woodpeckers during the breeding will be demonstrated. The program will last about two hours.

Trips 11 & 22: Howell Woods Environmental Learning Center and Raven Rock State Park

Howell Woods, approximately 75 miles east of Southern Pines, is a large (2800 acre) property with a variety of habitats from open fields to bottomland hardwood. There are extensive trails throughout and a number of streams and ponds as well as the river. We will also spend some time viewing the exhibits at the Visitor's Center (where there are restroom facilities). One of the highlights should be seeing Mississippi Kites. Individuals are frequently seen soaring over the fields while searching for large insects. Be prepared to see a wide variety of species including Green Heron, Red-headed Woodpecker, Eastern Kingbird, Wood Thrush, Indigo Bunting, Field Sparrow, Yellow-throated Vireo, Kentucky Warbler, Swainson's Warbler, and Ruby-throated Hummingbird. On the way back, the group will make a stop at Raven Rock State Park outside Sanford (at about the half way point back to Southern

Pines). We will stroll the scenic bluffs along the Cape Fear River surrounded by hardwoods where neotropical migrants are often plentiful. Woodland birding in the park often turns up mixed flocks with unexpected species in the spring such as Wilson's Warbler. Be sure to wear comfortable shoes since we may encounter some relief along the trails. However, the walking will not be too strenuous. Be sure to have a picnic lunch. The group should be back at the hotel by 5 PM.

Trip 12: Sandhills Game Land

This trip will visit some of the birding hotspots within just to the south of Southern Pines. Most of the species commonly found in xeric upland Longleaf Pine communities should be seen. There will be a stop along Thunder Road at what most consider the most beautiful stand of Longleaf in the area. In addition to searching for Bachman's Sparrows and Red-cockaded Woodpeckers, Wildlife Commission biologist Jeff Marcus will discuss how they are gradually restoring the game land's forests to their original state. Look for species as Field Sparrow, Indigo Bunting, Blue Grosbeak and Yellow-breasted Chat. The group will visit the McKinney Lake Fish Hatchery where they may find lingering shorebirds or waterbirds, or even spot a foraging Bald Eagle. A stop may also be made along Drowning Creek to search for flocks of migrants. There will be a restroom break along the way, but be sure to bring lunch. Be prepared to spend time walking on sandy terrain. We will return to the hotel by 4:30 p.m.

Trips 13 & 24: Raft Swamp Farms

This trip will head to Raft Swamp Farms outside of Raeford. The property owners, Jackie and Louie Hough, will give us a guided tour of their organic farm. The configuration of the property provides for an array of bird species that utilize early successional vegetation. If nothing else, the tour will provide first-hand experience of how organic farming works to enhance bird habitat and promote wildlife. After lunch, we will head next door to the Maynor property. The highlight is beautiful gum-cypress Hogins Pond. Here those who wish, may do some birding via canoe or kayak (\$8-12 rental fee or \$5 if you bring your own). However, there are also trails through the woods to explore for those who would prefer to stick to land. Between the two

(continued)

Southern Pines Field Trip Descriptions (continued)

properties, expect to encounter Green Heron, Loggerhead Shrike, Grasshopper Sparrow, Eastern Meadowlark, Field Sparrow, Prothonotary Warbler or Hooded Warbler. We will have access to restroom facilities at the Hough's. The group will be back at the hotel before 5 p.m.

Trip 14: Long Valley Farm

We have the unique opportunity to tour the Nature Conservancy's 1380-acre Long Valley Farm just north of Fayetteville. It was the bequest of the conservation-minded James Stillman Rockefeller in 2004. This relatively recent acquisition is still in the restoration phase and not yet open to the public. The group will be led on a tour by Ryan Elting, Director of the Nature Conservancy's Sandhills Office, of this mix of farmland, pasture and forest adjacent to Ft. Bragg. Not only are there healthy Longleaf Pine stands on the property, but there is also a mature cypress-gum swamp and wet meadows that support carnivorous plants like pitcher plants and sundews. Fox Squirrels have been seen on the property as well as Bachman's Sparrow, Red-cockaded Woodpecker and Loggerhead Shrike. There is an established Purple Martin colony adjacent to the family's old home. Birding potential at this site is still largely unknown, but expect a variety from Pine Warblers and Brown-headed Nuthatches to Great Crested Flycatchers, Prairie Warblers and Blue Grosbeaks. The group will be back at the hotel by noon.

Trip 15: All American Trail

In 2006, Fort Bragg created and dedicated seven miles of western Fort Bragg Military Installation's southern boundary as the All American Trail. The ten to fifteen foot wide unpaved pathway is designed for use by hikers, runners, and bicyclers. In 2007, the trail was also designated as part of the NC Birding Trail system. A Fort Bragg biologist will lead the group to the parking lot found at the trailhead off Raeford/Vass Road. We will be taking the portion of the trail to the east. The length of our hike be approximately 3 miles total. Habitat types the group will encounter include upland Longleaf Pine forest mixed with scrub oaks, open Longleaf Pine-wiregrass stands and a streamhead pocosin with cane and large hardwoods (Nicholson Creek). We will see a variety of bird species common

to the Sandhills region. At the end of the trail where we will be turning around, there is an active Red-cockaded Woodpecker (RCWs) cluster. Since it is the beginning of the RCW nesting season, there will be an excellent chance of seeing them in and around the cluster. You may want to bring along a camera in addition to binoculars, bird book, water bottle and a pair of comfortable walking shoes. The group will head back at the hotel by noon.

Trip 20: Hummingbirds

This is your chance to ask questions about hummingbird ecology and feeding in North Carolina. Observe Ruby-throated Hummingbirds up close as they are banded as part of ongoing research at the Visitor's Center. Don't forget your camera and plenty of film! The program will end around 3:30 p.m. or when the hummers thin out at the feeders.

Trip 23: Hinson Lake & Diggs Tract

Participants of this trip will accompany Terry Sharpe, retired wildlife biologist with the North Carolina Wildlife Resources Commission (NCWRC), to two very different destinations southwest of Southern Pines. The first, Hinson Lake, is a NCWRC owned property on the edge of Rockingham, roughly 30 miles south of Southern Pines. It consists of a lake (approx 50 acres), blackwater wetland complex, and Loblolly Pine uplands. We should see a variety of waterbirds, snakes, turtles, maybe Fox Squirrels, and others there. We will likely walk the loop trail, which is relatively flat and about 1.5 miles. Hinson Lake would be the first stop so that we can let the turkey hunters have the early morning at Diggs. The second stop, the Diggs Tract, is a very recent acquisition by NCWRC. It is a hilly Piedmont-type terrain. We will take a 4.5-mile hike with a good climb on the way out at Diggs. Everyone should pack a lunch so we can eat on the bluff overlooking the river. Most of the hike is through pine plantations before we reach the big attraction: the river corridor along the Pee Dee River. The upland should produce Yellow-breasted Chats, Prairie Warblers and Indigo Buntings with Prothonotary Warblers, Northern Parulas and Acadian Flycatchers along the river bottom. However, there are likely to be good numbers of migrants coming up the river, with the chance of some shorebirds, terns or

Southern Pines Field Trip Descriptions (continued)

gulls in the mix. Restrooms are available at Hinson Lake only. Group will be back at the hotel by 5 p.m.

Trip 26: Southern Pines & Pinehurst

Walk along the boundary of the historic Moore County Airport to look for Grasshopper Sparrows, Horned Larks and other grassland species. Explore trails at Southern Pines Reservoir Park and Sandhills Community College for migrants and early breeders among the expanse of Longleaf Pines, flowering trees, and wetland vegetation. Be sure to wear appropriate footwear and long pants since you may be walking through extensive grassy and damp areas. The trip will end at noon.

Special Notes on Field Trips

Please note that some field trips depart from the hotel, while others depart from Weymouth Woods Visitor's Center. Please plan accordingly. Most trips carpool to minimize the number of vehicles; if you have room or wish to ride with other participants, please let your

field trip leader know.

Some field trips are limited to the number of participants. Please check the Carolina Bird Club website at www.carolinabirdclub.org for a listing of full trips, changes to the trip schedule, or possible cancellations.

And finally, it will be turkey season at meeting time, so it is suggested that you bring a brightly colored hat along. A number of our trip destinations are public lands that are open to hunting, and our leaders will attempt to steer clear of hunters. But nonetheless, it's a good idea for folks to be somewhat more 'visible' as we venture out into the woods-- just in case.

Did You Know?

Weymouth Woods was once a winter country retreat for the Boyd family. The trees reminded novelist James Boyd's grandfather of Weymouth, England.

CBC Spring Meeting & Bonus Field Trip Registration Form

Name(s) _____

Address _____ City _____ State _____ Zip _____

Day Phone _____ Evening phone _____ Email _____

I am enclosing \$_____ for the following:

Bonus Field Trips

Brunswick County Woodpeckers _____ x \$20 = \$ _____
 Howell Woods _____ x \$40 = \$ _____
 Dobbins Farm _____ x \$10 = \$ _____

Southern Pines Spring Meeting

Meeting Registration (Member) _____ x \$15 = \$ _____
 Meeting Registration (Non-member) _____ x \$20 = \$ _____
 Saturday Buffet Dinner (each) _____ x \$25.95 = \$ _____

Club policy requires all field trip participants to comply with the field trip leader's assessment and requests concerning the physical ability of each participant to make or complete the trip. Meeting registration at the door costs \$25.

I release and discharge (and will not make a claim against) Carolina Bird Club for injury, death, or property damage arising from my participation at this meeting and/or Club field trips. This release of liability is entered into on behalf of all members of my family, including all minors accompanying me. I certify that I am the parent or legal guardian of any such minors and that I am over 18 years of age.

Signature _____ Date _____ Signature _____ Date _____

Make check payable to Carolina Bird Club and send to: CBC, 353 Montabello, Bloomingdale, IL 60108

☐ Please update my address or other contact information as listed above

Field Trip Sign-Up	A.M. 1st/2nd Choice	P.M. 1st/2nd Choice	All Day 1st/2nd Choice
Thursday	None	/	None
Friday	/	/	/
Saturday	/	/	/
Sunday	/	None	None



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Carolina Beach/Ft. Fisher, NC Fall 2008
North Carolina's "Inner Banks", Winter 2009

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